Aflatoxin contamination in groundnut oil

1897. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is aflatoxin contamination in groundnut oil and related commodities;

(b) the potential risk on the health of the consumers;

(c) whether the side effects of aflatoxin contamination on health have been analysed;

(d) if so, the details; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) No such instance has been brought to the notice of the Government.

(b) to (e) The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) has evaluated aflatoxin and the latest evaluation was carried out in 1987. On the basis of this evaluation, it has been recommended by that Committee that it should be at lowest level practically attainable. Accordingly, the PFA Rules, 1955 prescribe a maximum limit of aflatoxin, which is a crop contaminant, as maximum 0.03 mg/kg in any article of food. The limits prescribed are considered as no potential risk on the health of consumes.

Shortage of medicines in CGHS dispensaries

1898. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a severe shortage of medicines in the CGHS dispensaries in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the main suppliers of medicines are making inordinate delay in the supply of medicines to the CGHS dispensaries; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to revamp the working of these Government medical stores and CGHS dispensaries so that Government employees do not face any hardship due to shortage of medicines?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In view of (a) above, the question does not arise.

(c) and (d) There has been some decline in the supply of medicines to the CGHS due to non-finalisation of formulary.

To overcome the situation, the CGHS had appointed authorised local chemists for supply of medicines to the CGHS beneficiaries. CGHS has also prepared a list of 65 commonly indented medicines in addition to the 138 generic medicines available in the formulary of the Government of NCT of Delhi. As per the list containing 203 drug items prepared by CGHS, it was decided by the Government to procure the medicines through Hospital Services Consultancy Corporation (HSCC) which is a Government of India Undertaking. The Government has also approved formulary for generic drugs of the Government of NCT of Delhi for procurement of drugs.

Any drug prescribed by the Govt. Specialists, not available in the dispensary, is issued to the beneficiary after procuring the same from the authorised local chemist on the basis of the individual prescription of the beneficiary.

Health Insurance

1899. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that health insurance is turning out to be the fastest growing segment in the non-life insurance industry with an average growth of 40 per cent; and

(b) if so, the action Government are taking to ensure that this security is available and affordable to the lower section of the society?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) The four public sector general insurance companies have been selling "Mediclaim Insurance Policy". The information relating to number of persons covered under mediclaim policy and the premium income therefrom during the past five years is given below: